

Stirling Council



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Bill Scott,
Corporate Planning & Resource Manager

Background

When Stirling Council needed to devise a document output strategy that would help make efficiencies and improve user experience, it looked to specialist Danwood Scotland to help achieve its goals.

Bill Scott, Corporate Planning & Resource Manager, co-ordinated the consultancy-led, open tender exercise, noting: “The Council had an opportunity to take a more in-depth look at document output. We had just completed our IT Strategy and were about to replace our copier fleet. We had some raw data that indicated we were incurring a fair amount of unnecessary cost for printing which could be reduced and so help our ‘Efficient Government’ programme. Therefore, an expert view was required to help us pull together the data and apply their specialist knowledge to identify key areas for improvement. The Council was also keen to develop a document output strategy that was environmentally sensitive and consistent in its approach.”

Following competitive tender issued in October 2006 and shortlist presentations Danwood Scotland was awarded the consultancy project.

Bill Scott observed: “Danwood Scotland clearly demonstrated their leading expertise in this field and the resource available to them which was crucial because of our challenging timescales.”

The Danwood Scotland consultancy division, Insatsu Chosa® (Japanese for print investigation) was introduced to the team at Viewforth and the parameters and timescales for the consultancy were agreed. Danwood’s consultants then looked at all aspects of the Council’s document output and completed intensive floorplan audits of the main campus and city centre offices over the month of December 2006.

In January a draft report was submitted to Stirling Council, which detailed the findings of this audit and the strategy for future success in the area of document output. This was refined and presented to the Council’s Management Team in April 2007, where its key findings were endorsed.

Benefits

- Management buy-in derived from using a specialist in the field of document output
- Identification of ‘quick wins’ for cash releasing efficiencies
- Development of a strategy that addresses sustainability issues
- Culture change programme to win hearts and minds of users



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The Outcome

The key findings of the audit were that Stirling Council had:

- An overcapacity of devices, particularly desktop printers
- A high cost per page from all devices
- A poor user:device ratio
- Underuse of networking to low cost copiers/MFD's
- Inefficient use of fax machines
- Inefficient colour device usage
- Inefficient scanner deployment
- Minimal use of efficiency features
- Poor user perceptions towards output devices.

These findings showed that the Council incurred a high cost of document output ownership within its office space. Two recently surveyed Scottish Councils both had 5,600 pages and 6,000 pages per annum as user averages. Stirling's was nearer 12,000.

Danwood Scotland is fully aware of the Efficient Government Initiative and the drive towards both cash and time releasing efficiencies. With this in mind, the recommendations benefit both key efficiency gains. Recommendations were made in four key areas; namely, MFD implementation plan, quick wins, output strategy and sustainability.



Danwood Scotland advised the Council to use a balanced deployment methodology in its approach to MFD roll-out and provided detailed before and after deployment proposals to advise the roll-out of the new MFD fleet. Suggestions were made under the banner of 'quick wins', which included an immediate embargo on the purchase of locally attached devices as many of these would be freed up to the strategic aim of networking users to the new MFD's. Other recommendations included the use of high yield toner cartridges, reduced toner settings, duplex as standard and a reduction in the quantity of fax machines, to name but a few.

Additionally, the team also looked at the Copy Centre, or Central Reprographics Department (CRD), and recommended that Stirling Council maximise the use of this facility as a more cost-effective way to produce print output. Electronic job submission, rules-based printing and web-based procurement systems can all increase the benefits of this service and further reduce Council costs substantially.

The Solution

A change in the wasteful print culture of end users will play an important role in the future success of this strategy. To raise awareness, the project has been branded as S.C.A.P.E. (Stirling Council Achieving Print Efficiency) and the Danwood team worked with the Council to emphasise the true cost of printing and copying with a strong environmental theme to help users feel more accountable for their actions.

There has been the creation of a solid relationship between Stirling Council and Danwood Scotland which will be developed in the future.

On Danwood Scotland's recommendation, Chris Steward has been appointed to act as a Print Efficiency Manager within the Council to work closely with the Infrastructure Team and the business, to ensure the strategy is delivered. A set of Key Performance Indicators will allow Stirling Council to measure progress and drive success.

Danny Johnston, Corporate Team, Danwood Scotland, concludes: "Stirling Council has worked closely with Danwood Scotland to take the first steps to achieving sustainable print efficiency. It's now important that they realise these projected savings and embark on a Council-wide communication strategy to ensure all users embrace and benefit from the new printing and copying infrastructure."